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# AN Epiſtle to FRIENDS

Concerning the

# Education of Children.

NEXT the Care of our own Souls, a right Education of our Children is greateſt, for he can ſcarce be ſaid to be a Happy Father, whoſe Child is Unhappy: And alſo the great Maſter of Heaven and Earth, who hath given us the Charge over them, to Nurſe and Educate, will require them at our hands: For if ſuch Inanimate Things, as Corn, Wine and Flax, ſhall be accounted for, much more our Off-ſpring. Yet it's to be feared, if there is not more Care, and a better Method than hath been hitherto taken, in many of our Childrens Education, too many of them will leave the Service, and loſe the Bleſſing of Upholding the Profeſſion of Truth in ſucceeding Ages to the Families of Strangers, whilſt the Poſterity of the preſent Profeſſors of it, may have little Share in it.

Heavy and Sore was the Judgment, upon that honourable old Man *Eli*, for his Neglect of his Children, (tho' he reproved them,) their Sins being his and their Ruin, and the Loſs of the Prieſthood.

Reproof ſtands for little, without other good Management (and with it Children trained young, will need little Correction or Reproof either) and that lies much in a conſtant uſeful Imployment, joyn'd with good Inſtruction; a good Inſtructor being like to a good Seeds-man; but how Poor will the Crop be, if the Husband-man doth not manage

his

his Ground, first by Plowing and stirring it, to prevent Weeds growing.

The Mind is always at work; bringing forth something, and a right managing of that in our Children, is the chief of our Charge concerning them; and their Thoughts are of four sorts, 1*st*, either Innocent, as when Infants; or 2*dly*, Useful, when their Hands are usefully imploy'd; or 3*dly*, Foolish or Wicked, When Idle; or 4*thly*, Religious. Idleness is the Devil's great Opportunity, especially added to ill Company.

Infants are capable of little but feeding, bigger Children of some Knowledge of Good and Evil, yet of being kept as Innocent from the Evil as in their Sucking-days, by their Thoughts being entertain'd upon the Subject their hands are imploy'd in, when not upon the Instruction their Tutors shall give them (suitable to their Age) and so forward till they come to a stronger Judgment; How readily then will they receive the Council of God, when their Regular and Innocent Education hath given their Spirits the Nature of the good Ground, (neither High-way nor Stony?) And a Child thus bred, will not readily depart from it when he is Old.

But few private Persons have the Conveniencies, Leisure and Capacity, of giving their Children an Exact Education at Home; such as have Instructions usually wanting suitable Imployment, and such as have Imployment often wanting Instructions; so that the Subject is indispensably the Churches Care, and worth their Modelling.

Now as a further Preface to what may be said for an Industrious Education of Children, I recommend to your Consideration my Printed Proposals for Raising a Colledge of Industry.

*John Bellers.*

*Dear Friends,*

WE having Peruſed and Conſidered a Diſcourſe, lately Publiſhed by our Friend *John Bellers*, for the better Education of Youth, and Ampler Proviſion for the Poor; the Care of whom Friends were Particularly Exhorted to by the laſt Yearly Meeting; we Recommend the ſaid Book to your Conſideration; as, believing it may be of Uſe for thoſe good Ends, if one Houſe or Colledge, for a beginning, were ſet on foot, with a joint Stock, by the Friends of Eſtates through the Nation.

*William Penn*
*Charles Marſhall*
*Leonard Fell*
*John Vaughton*
*Francis Stamper*
*Elias Osborne*
*Joſhua Middleton*
*Oliver Sanſom*
*Thomas Gillpin*
*Richard Aſheby*
*John Boulton*
*Richard Watſon*
*Robert Barclay*
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*Clement Plumſted*
*William Robinſon*
*Joſiah Garton*
*Peregrine Muſgrave*
*John Harwood*
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*William Crouch*
*John Edge*
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*James Waſs*
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*Robert Ruddle*
*Thomas Dell.*
*Abel Wilkinſon*
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*Edward Wright*
*John Tomkins*
*John Knight*
*Reuben Linskile*
*John Freame*
*Benjamin Ewer*
*Robert Fairman*
*John Hodgskins*
*John Light*
*John Bawne*
*Richard Cook*
*John Haddon.*

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